

REMARKS

Upon entry of the present Amendment, claims 1-11 will be pending, of which claims 1-11 will have been amended. The above amendments have not been made in order to narrow the scope of the claims. Rather, these amendments have been made to improve the language of the claims. In particular, the amendments have been made in order to improve the grammar, idiom and syntax used in the claims so as to clarify the features of Applicants' invention without narrowing the scope of the claims. Accordingly, no prosecution history estoppel should attach to these amendments.

In view of the herein contained remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of all objections and rejections together with an indication of the allowability of all the claims pending in the present application, in due course. Such action is respectfully requested and is believed to be appropriate and proper.

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's acknowledgement of Applicants' claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f), as well as confirmation of receipt of the certified copy of the priority document.

Applicants further note with appreciation the Examiner's acceptance of the drawings filed on November 7, 2003.

Applicants further note with appreciation the Examiner's consideration of the two co-pending and commonly assigned patent applications, including U.S. Patent Application

No. 10/461,681 to HAN et al. and U.S. Patent Application No. 10/679,481 to ROH et al., which were cited in the Information Disclosure Statement (IDS), filed February 24, 2004, as indicated at page 2 of the Official Action. Applicants respectfully submit that the IDS, filed February 24, 2004, was fully compliant with 37 CFR 1.98(a)(1). In this regard, Applicants note that at the time the IDS was filed, the policy of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office was to cross-out any co-pending applications listed on a PTO-1449 Form, as such applications would not be printed on the face of a patent. It was not until applications were published that it was permissible to list co-pending applications on a PTO-1449 Form. If the Examiner maintains that the IDS was non-compliant with Rule 1.98(a)(1), Applicants request that the Examiner provide a reason as to the lack of compliance of the IDS.

Applicants note that the two co-pending and commonly assigned patent applications, which were cited in the IDS of February 24, 2004, have now been published as U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2004/0111496 (Application No. 10/461,681, published on June 10, 2004) and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2004/0073620 (Application No. 10/679,481, published on April 15, 2004). Both documents were published subsequent to the filing of the IDS. Accordingly, Applicants submit herewith a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement (SIDS), citing the two U.S. patent application publications for the Examiner's consideration. Applicants respectfully request

that the Examiner consider the concurrently filed SIDS and return an initialed and signed copy of the Form PTO-1449, filed herewith, in the next Official communication. Further, Applicants submit that no fee is required to be paid to ensure consideration of the submitted material, as the documents are merely published application documents of previously cited non-published applications.

Applicants note that while the drawings have not been formerly accepted on the Form PTOL-326 (which accompanied the above-noted Official Action), the drawings have not been objected to in the Official Action. Accordingly, absent any evidence to the contrary, Applicants believe that the drawings filed December 2, 2003 are acceptable to the Examiner and no further action is necessary on the part of Applicant with regard to the drawings.

In the Official Action, claim 6 is objected to because of an informality, claims 1-8 and 10-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by HEITKAMP et al. (US 6,970,961 B1), and claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over HEITKAMP et al. in view of JEFFRIES (US 6,009,479 B1). Applicants traverse the rejections of claims 1-11 and the objection to claim 6 (*i.e.*, in so far as it applies to claim 6 as amended herein), and respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the same, for at least the following reasons.

Regarding the objection to claim 6 for including the term

“comparator/determinator,” Applicants submit that this objection is overcome upon entry of the present amendments made herein to claim 6. In particular, upon entry of the present Amendment, claim 6 will have been amended to delete the term “comparator/determinator” and insert -- determinator --, in its stead. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to claim 6.

Regarding the rejection of claims 1-8 and 10-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) based on HEITKAMP et al., Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Applicants submit that HEITKAMP et al. does not disclose, *e.g.*, a network manager that sends a control command to a master device, that automatically assigns a network address to the master device to connect the master device to the network when the master device is newly connected to the network, as recited in, *e.g.*, independent claim 1, or notifying a plurality of home appliances connected to the network that the master device comprising the unique address has been appropriately connected to the network, as recited in, *e.g.*, independent claim 8, or the process of connecting a new home appliance to a network, including the other processes, as recited in, *e.g.*, independent claim 10.

For example, referring to Figure 3 of the present application, according to a non-limiting aspect of the invention, a network system (and method for operating the same) is provided that connects a plurality of master devices and a plurality of slave devices. The invention allows for the automatic installation of a newly connected master device into an

existing network. Moreover, the invention allows for the automatic installation of a master device having a unique address into a network system comprising one or more home appliances.

HEITKAMP et al., on the other hand, is directed to a network system comprising redundant buses with redundant master controllers and slave controllers (*see, e.g.*, FIG. 2). The HEITKAMP et al. network system is primarily concerned with addressing a need for reliable and redundant controls signals (*see, e.g.*, column 1, lines 7-9; column 2, lines 16-24). Accordingly, HEITKAMP et al. discloses two buses (*e.g.*, BUS_A and BUS_B), each of which is under the control of a corresponding master controller (*e.g.*, MASTER_A and MASTER_B), for communicating information amongst the slave devices and the master controllers connected to the buses. In this regard, each master controller controls the bus operations and creates an address interval and a data interval. During the address interval, the controlling master controller provides a destination address on the multiplexed address and data line 310 (*see, e.g.*, FIG. 3), where the destination address identifies a slave device 220 to which a command signal or data signal is to be sent during the data interval. Hence, HEITKAMP et al. functions, for the most part, similar to many existing network systems comprising a network that is connected to a plurality of master and slave devices. However, HEITKAMP et al. does not provide for an automatic installation of a newly connected master controller.

In fact, HEITKAMP et al. makes no provisions for adding new components to the network system defined by, *e.g.*, BUS_A and/or BUS_B, much less a master device. Referring to, for example, the Abstract and column 1, lines 40-51, which were relied upon in the rejection of claim 1 to show the feature of a network manager (*see, e.g.*, page 3 of the Official Action), HEITKAMP et al. merely summarizes the redundant processes of communicating information amongst the slave devices and the master controllers connected to the buses, where each master controller controls the bus operations and creates an address interval and a data interval. As noted above, during the address interval, the controlling master controller provides a destination address on the multiplexed address and data line 310 (*see, e.g.*, FIG. 3), where the destination address identifies a slave device 220 to which a command signal or data signal is to be sent during the data interval. However, HEITKAMP et al. does not disclose, *e.g.*, a network manager, or an equivalent thereof, that sends a control command to a master device, that automatically assigns a network address to the master device to connect the master device to the network when the master device is newly connected to the network, as recited, *e.g.*, in independent claim 1.

Applicants submit that HEITKAMP et al. fails to even disclose a home appliance, much less, *e.g.*, notifying at least one of a plurality of home appliances connected to the network that the master device comprising the unique address has been appropriately connected to the network, as recited in, *e.g.*, independent claim 8 or claim 10. Applicants

submit that the HEITKAMP et al. patent, including column 3, line 63, through column 4, line 4, which was cited in the Official Action, fails to provide any support for a use or a connection of HEITKAMP et al.’s redundant bus-based system with a home appliance. Furthermore, Applicants submit that HEITKAMP et al. does not disclose connecting a new home appliance or determining whether the new home appliance is a master device, as recited in independent claim 10.

Accordingly, because HEITKAMP et al. does not disclose each and every element of the independent claims, *i.e.*, claims 1, 8 and 10, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-8 and 10-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) based on HEITKAMP et al. is respectfully requested. Further, claims 2-7 and 11 depend from claims 1 and 10 and are patentably distinguishable for at least the reasons provided above with respect to claims 1 and 10, as well as for additional reasons related to their own recitations.

Regarding the rejection of claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on HEITKAMP et al. and JEFFRIES, Applicants traverse this rejection. Applicants respectfully submit that JEFFRIES does not teach or render obvious that which is lacking in HEITKAMP et al., as discussed above, *e.g.*, with regard to independent claims 1, 8 and/or 10.

Referring to page 8 of the Official Action, the rejection of claim 9 concedes that HEITKAMP “**do not teach** assigning the generated specific address to he master device when search of the unique address is unsuccessful.” The rejection, therefore, relies on

JEFFRIES only to teach the feature of automatically generating a specific address and assigning the generated specific address to the master device when the search of the unique address is unsuccessful (*see, e.g.*, page 9 of the Official Action). Therefore, Applicants submit that JEFFRIES does not cure the noted-above deficiencies of HEITKAMP et al., and that the rejection of claim 9 should be reconsidered and withdrawn in the next Official communication.

Thus, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to claim 6, the rejection of claims 1-8 and 10-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 based on HEITKAMP et al., and the rejection of claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 based on HEITKAMP et al. and JEFFRIES, and an indication of the allowability of all pending claims in the next Official communication.

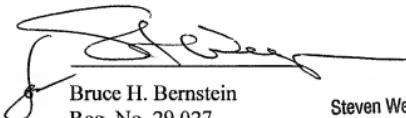
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that the objection to claim 6 and the rejections under 35 USC § 102 and 103 in the Official Action dated May 2, 2007, should be withdrawn. The present Amendment is in proper form, and none of the cited documents teach or suggest Applicants' claimed invention. In addition, the applied documents of record have been discussed and distinguished, while significant features of the present invention have been pointed out. Accordingly, Applicants request timely allowance of the present application.

Should an extension of time be necessary to maintain the pendency of this application, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fee to Deposit Account No. 19-0089.

Should the Examiner have any further questions, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
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